

The Magical Mystery Tour



Acting Director Craig Stenning continued to fulfill his promise to visit with as many individuals, agencies and advocates as his schedule permits. During the past three weeks one of his most informative visits was with Noreen Shallcross (Office of Housing and Community Development) to Harrington Hall – the last remaining men’s open homeless shelter. Taking up a space in the corner of the Hall, Craig met privately with several men who described their journey to homelessness and problems with mental illness and substance abuse.

Another impressive visit was with staff and Board members from the ARC of Blackstone Valley. They presented a comprehensive plan for the future of their agency and several exciting opportunities for expanded services to families. After leaving Blackstone Valley, Craig stopped in at McAuley House for their recovery celebration. Craig had a similar visit with the Fellowship and a discussion about several ways to reform the funding of mental health services.

There were also three meaningful presentations that Craig was involved in during the last couple of weeks. He was one of the speakers at the recognition ceremony for the 18th year celebration of the Americans with Disabilities Act at Corliss Village. He was thanked for *“the dignity and strength you brought to this event, and thank you for your generous and kind comments. I hope you know that your leadership is appreciated by all of us, and that your dedication sets a wonderful example for the community at large.”*

The next speech was part of the celebration of the passage of a strengthen “*Social Hosting*” law which makes parents responsible for under-aged drinking on their property, as well as a recognition of the youth leadership graduates from MADD’s summer program. Craig thanked the young people for taking the message of change in attitudes towards drinking to their peers. He concluded with his personal feelings about drinking and the connection to families and individual lives.

Craig’s next presentation was at the Annual Board meeting of Board of Directors of the Mental Health Association on the [*“Global Waiver”*](#). Craig explained the opportunities for new options the Waiver will offer to individuals within the behavioral healthcare system. He also spent nearly an hour answering questions about the Waiver in regards to choice, options and funding.

Additional meetings took place with NAMI-RI, Rhode Health, Perspectives, Looking Upwards, the RI Disability Law Center and PAL.

The schedule continues into the fall.